



Patriotism and the 4th of July with GLEN A. CHANEY

Cee Cee Donovan: *What does the 4th of July mean to you, both as a Masonic leader and as an American citizen?*

Glen Chaney: *Throughout my memory, Independence Day has always held great importance to me. Service and Citizenship has been a part of my life since I can remember.*

As a young child, I carefully observed both my own Mother, a School Teacher, and my Father, a Navy Hospital Corpsman, as they set the example of these important ideals. In the early 70's they decided to adopt two young boys and raise them as their own. A selfless act of love and the model of service to others without any expectation of reward. He was on active duty and periodically serving abroad which quickly made me aware of the importance of citizenship and service. These memories and the examples of my Father, led to my own enlistment in the United States Army which lasted more than 21 years. Continuing this selfless legacy, my own Son has now answered the call of service and patriotism by enlisting in the United States Air Force. I have endeavored to teach him, as my Father taught me, that Service to our fellow man, our communities, our State and our Nation should be a part of every citizen's daily life.

The 4th of July, being Independence Day, celebrates the ratification of the Declaration of Independence by the Second Continental Congress which established the United States of America. This momentous occasion created the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth and has set the standards of freedom across the world. Our Independence Day celebration commemorates the acts of those brave Americans who stood up and proclaimed to the Monarch of Britain, King George III, that we would no longer be subject to his rule and would begin our history as free citizens of this newly created Nation. Growing from the original 13 colonies, to our present-day 50 State Republic,

this Nation, on this day pays homage to those founding Fathers, and Mothers who guided us through those perilous times to arrive at our present day greatness. Independence Day is also our opportunity to give thanks to those who have dedicated and given their lives to our national success.

Cee Cee Donovan: *How does the Scottish Rite, or Freemasonry in general, honor and celebrate American independence and the values it represents?*

Glen Chaney: *While no one man can speak for Freemasonry or the Scottish Rite, I personally find many examples of patriotism and the values of independence in the Scottish Rite and in Freemasonry as a whole. After over 300 years of recorded history, Freemasonry's teachings include many useful lessons of antiquity and from our Masonic founding fathers such as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. On the particular day of this celebration, many local lodges and other Masonic institutions will commemorate by gathering with family and friends at the familiar cook-outs and fireworks shows, but more importantly to celebrate the birth of our Nation by many Freemasons that are so well known in history as Leaders, but not necessarily as Masons. Our masonic heritage includes 14 U.S. Presidents, many congressional and senatorial leaders, sports figures, military leaders and just about every single profession in the country today. We celebrate and commemorate this occasion by steadily persevering in the practice of those virtues which embodies*

the greatness of our entire people. To me, Freemasonry stands on these ideals, and reminds me to build in myself and instill into others the importance of true freedom. Human progress, freedom of thought, freedom of religion, and the guarantee of equal rights to all people everywhere must remain the focus of our daily efforts.

Cee Cee Donovan: *Are there any Masonic traditions or ceremonies that particularly resonate with the spirit of Independence Day?*

Glen Chaney: *Community and Heritage*

Each local Lodge and District within our State will hold their own celebrations, but we encourage all members and citizens of this great land to share in the experience of National pride and success of a free people. Each state is governed by an individual Grand Lodge under the direction of a Grand Master who may choose to host a celebration in their respective jurisdiction. Masonry in the United States acknowledges the importance of our national identity and at all times upholds the many fraternal men who laid down those stones of freedom upon which we all walk.

Cee Cee Donovan: *How does the Guthrie Scottish Rite contribute to local community events, especially those that celebrate American heritage and patriotism?*

Glen Chaney: *Citizenship and Service are some of the most important elements of patriotism. Our work at The Guthrie Scottish Rite includes support for the education of our youth. The organization here in Guthrie operates the*

Guthrie Scottish Rite Charitable and Educational Foundation which awards many scholarships to the young citizens engaged in their education at both secondary and technical schools. As a non-profit organization, we are always looking for new and creative ways to support the future citizenry of this Nation. In addition to our annual scholarships, one of our biggest efforts is the support of the Oklahoma State University Speech and Language Disorder Clinic in Stillwater at the OSU Campus. Our support of the Rite-Care Clinic has made impacts on many lives of young Americans and those speech professionals that do the work of the clinic.

Cee Cee Donovan: *Can you describe the importance of Masonic temples like the one in Guthrie to the cultural and historical fabric of Oklahoma?*

Glen Chaney: *The Guthrie Scottish Rite Temple was constructed in the 1920's. It has served as a historical landmark to the days of Guthrie's beginnings as well as the State of Oklahoma. This 10-acre site was the location of the first Convention Hall where it was voted to move the capital of Oklahoma to its present location in Oklahoma City. We have stood as a partner in Guthrie and in Oklahoma to further the principles and values of our Nation. We have hosted movie productions, such as the recently released 'Reagan' starring Dennis Quaid and other films and smaller productions. This amazing structure is home to many unique time-period rooms and victorian style architecture which lends itself to many different genres of*

productions. From our unique gothic library to our ornate artistic rooms, and the rich sounds of the 1926 Kimball pipe organ (more than 5000 pipes in total), we are resolute in our commitment to its survival as a cultural and historic treasure.

As a Masonic institution, the Guthrie Scottish Rite is one of the premier locations in which a Master Mason has the opportunity to attend several events a year to help guide and teach them lessons of morality, equality and freedom. We host two reunions each year here at Guthrie. We have just completed our spring session where we enjoyed the company of over 700 of our members who traveled from Oklahoma communities, other States and as far away as Brazil and Germany to attend here in Guthrie, OK. We will continue to serve the community by providing some of the best presentations of these important ceremonies across the country which results in annual visitors from all over the world who fill the hotels, restaurants, attractions and businesses of the City of Guthrie and surrounding areas. The importance of this partnership cannot be overstated. Both historically and culturally, the Guthrie Scottish Rite Temple and the City of Guthrie work in partnership to bring foundations and memories of the past together with the lessons and teachings of multitudes of generations that have charted the course of both.

Cee Cee Donovan: *What message would you like to share with fellow Oklahomans about unity, service, and patriotism on this 4th of July?*

Glen Chaney: *We all should continually seek opportunities to come together as citizens of this great Nation and find the common ground we all stand on. These include unity with our fellow citizens, service to others and true patriotism for our Country. The United States of America, as was quoted by President Abraham Lincoln as, "the last best hope for Earth.." will survive and prosper if we continue to champion the values and traditions of our heritage. Celebrate our Nation's birth. Learn from its errors of the past and capitalize on our strengths so that our children's children may also joyously celebrate this wonderful anniversary of a free people who seek to improve themselves each and every day.*

Cee Cee Donovan: *What are your hopes for the future of the Guthrie Scottish Rite, and how do you see it continuing to serve both its members and the broader community?*

Glen Chaney: *The Fraternity of Freemasons in Oklahoma and the Scottish Rite have a rich history of service to our State. Many Masonic leaders in the areas of industry, education, music, sports, leadership and business have added to the prosperity and success of Oklahoma and we have the hope that many more good men of our communities will feel compelled to seek out one of the over 200 lodges in our State and ask that all important question, "how can I become involved?" We here at Guthrie Scottish Rite hope to continue the great tradition of friendship and partnership with Guthrie and Oklahoma as a whole to*

inspire future generations to continue the legacy of American traditions.

Cee Cee Donovan: *How can individuals interested in Masonic values get involved in your organization, especially as we celebrate the birth of our nation?*

Glen Chaney: *There are several ways to become involved and support the causes of our great Fraternity. Visit our website at www.guthriescottishrite.org to see our many Masonic programs and to enjoy a virtual tour of the temple. Or come by Monday through Thursday at 10:00am to enjoy the daily tour of our beautiful Masonic edifice. Our upcoming events and our Charitable and Educational causes can also be found there and any contribution to the Foundation or its efforts is a tax-deductible donation. For more information on the Freemasons of Oklahoma, how to find a Lodge or to inquire about membership, visit www.gloklahoma.com*

Cee Cee Donovan: *Thank you Mr. Chaney.*

Glen Chaney: *It's been my pleasure*

Glen A. Chaney, 32°, K.C.C.H.

General Secretary - Guthrie Scottish Rite of Freemasonry

Past Grand Master of Oklahoma Masons

Past Grand Commander of Knights Templar of Oklahoma